

Better Backroads

The Clean and Clear Action Plan recognizes the role towns can play in reducing phosphorus loading to Lake Champlain by reducing erosion of town roads and their associated ditches, culverts and banks. By providing grant funds and technical assistance to towns, the Vermont Better Backroads Program fixes erosion problems and encourages better maintenance methods in all Champlain basin towns as well as throughout Vermont.

Better Backroads Grant Program

The Better Backroads Program has been offering grants and technical assistance since 1997, with the goal of fixing erosion problems and encouraging towns to adopt improved maintenance techniques that protect water. The Program notes that the same techniques that protect water also save the town money over the long run by reducing the need for “band-aid” repairs. The Program is administered by the Northern Vermont Resource Conservation and Development Council (RC&D), and is an active partnership. The Backroads Steering Committee includes:

- VT Local Roads Program, Hank Lambert
- VT Agency of Transportation, Bill McManis and Ernie Englehardt
- VT Department of Environmental Conservation, Susan Warren and Chris Brunelle
- Northern VT and George D Aiken RC&Ds, Beth Ann Finlay and Ken Haffner



Eroding roadsides such as this are sources of phosphorus pollution.



The Better Backroads Grant Program funds rock-lined ditches on steep slopes such as this one in Greensboro.

New additional funding made available through Clean and Clear significantly increases the funds available for grants and technical assistance. With FY 2005 Clean and Clear Funds (plus the Backroads Program’s base funding), \$217,002 in grants was awarded to 25 towns.

The Better Backroads Grant Program provides funds to towns for two purposes:

- A. Create a Road Inventory and Capital Budget Plan; and
- B. Correct an existing erosion problem on a town road.

Create Road Inventory and Capital Budget Plan

Reduction of road erosion requires planning and budgeting to realize cost savings and road improvements. Development of a capital budget shows a town is committed to solving its road erosion problems. By identifying and ranking problems and budgeting for their optimum correction, towns will be able to correct significant problems over a period of years and justify the cost-savings to taxpayers.

The following towns were awarded grants in this category in 2005:

| Organization | Project Name & Description | Amount Awarded |
|----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Town of Belvidere | Belvidere Drainage Improvements & Capital Budget | \$3,000.00 |
| Town of Glover | Glover Culvert Inventory Update | \$4,000.00 |
| Town of Hyde Park | Hyde Park Road Inventory & Capital Budget Plan | \$3,000.00 |
| Town of Mendon | Mendon Road Inventory & Capital Budget Plan | \$4,000.00 |
| Town of North Hero | North Hero Erosion Inventory, Roads & Culverts | \$4,000.00 |
| Town of Orwell | Orwell Road Inventory and Capital Budget Planning Project | \$3,000.00 |
| Town of Pittsford | Road & Culvert Inventory | \$4,000.00 |
| Town of Topsham | Topsham Road Inventory & Budget Plan | \$3,960.00 |
| Town of West Fairlee | West Fairlee Erosion Inventory & Budget Plan | \$2,527.00 |
| Total | | \$31,487.00 |

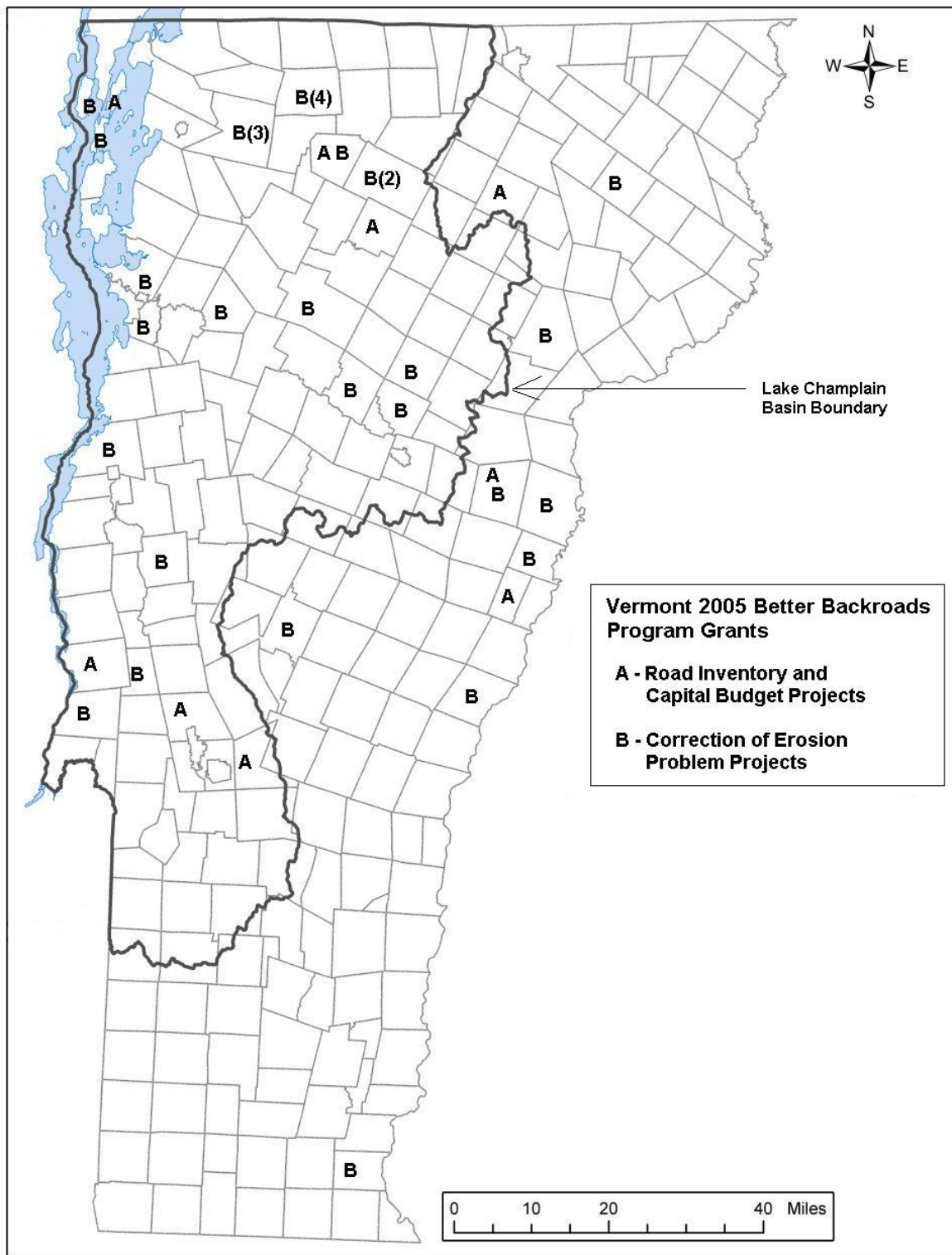
Correct an Existing Erosion Problem on a Town Road

Grants in this category are intended to fix erosion problems optimally and correctly in order to protect water quality, achieve long-term stability and save the town money by eliminating annual repairs. Types of problems typically fixed with these grants include eroding ditches and banks, and unstable or undersized culverts. Private road associations are also eligible for funding.

The following towns or groups were awarded grants in this category in 2005:

| Organization | Project Name & Description | Amount Awarded |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Town of Belvidere | Bog Road/Lamoille River Streambank Stabilization | \$2,625.00 |
| Town of Benson | Sunset Lake Roadbank Erosion Control Project | \$6,750.00 |
| Bradford Town Highway | Wrights Mountain Road - Ditch Erosion | \$3,918.00 |
| Town of Brattleboro DPW | Black Mountain Brook Culvert Header | \$4,800.00 |
| Town of Calais | Worcester Road (Calais) Culvert Replacement | \$2,026.00 |
| Town of Colchester | Shore Acres Drive Drainage Stabilization | \$7,000.00 |
| Town of Danville | Water Andric Road Project - Riverbank Erosion | \$5,547.00 |
| Town of East Montpelier | Coburn Rd (Th30) & Cate Farm Rd (Th31 Br#21) | \$7,000.00 |

| Organization | Project Name & Description | Amount Awarded |
|------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Town of Eden | White Branch Erosion Control On Knowles Flat Rd | \$6,773.00 |
| Town of Eden | Gihon River Streambank Stabilization | \$5,238.00 |
| Town of Enosburg | Horse Shoe Circle Road | \$3,483.00 |
| Town of Enosburg | Boston Post Road (Th2) Site 9 - Shoulder Erosion | \$6,500.00 |
| Town of Enosburg | Tyler Branch Road - Streambank Erosion | \$4,123.00 |
| Town of Enosburg | Bogue Road (Th30) Site 3 - Eroded Stream | \$5,085.00 |
| Town of Fairfield | Bradley Road (Th57) - Ditch Erosion | \$6,952.00 |
| Town of Fairfield | Mitchell Road (Th35) - Ditch Erosion | \$7,000.00 |
| Town of Fairfield | Juaire Road (Th41) - Erosion To Road Slope | \$4,830.00 |
| Town of Ferrisburgh | Satterly Road - Erosion In Ditch | \$7,000.00 |
| Town of Isle Lamotte | West Shore Road Erosion | \$6,307.00 |
| Town of Jericho Highway Dept. | Mill Brook Streambank Stabilization | \$7,000.00 |
| Lamoille Co. Nat. Res. Cons. Dist. | Regional Hydro-Seeder Promotion Project | \$7,000.00 |
| Town of Middlebury | Morse Road Drainage Project | \$6,900.00 |
| Town of Middlesex | Government Hill - Eroded Culverts | \$6,866.00 |
| Town of Newbury | Scotch Hollow Road "2004" Reconstruction Project | \$5,700.00 |
| Town of North Hero | Lakeview Drive Bank Stabilization | \$5,700.00 |
| Town of Norwich Highway Dept. | Goddard Road Erosion Control Project | \$5,900.00 |
| Town of Rochester | West Hill Road Culvert Replacement | \$6,480.00 |
| Town of Stowe | Upper Pinnacle Road Ditch Lining | \$6,900.00 |
| South Burlington DPW | Beacon Street Storm Sewer Improvements | \$7,000.00 |
| Southeast Newark Pond Assn | Erosion Control/Improved Drainage At Newark Pond | \$6,362.00 |
| Town of Sudbury | Burr Pond Bank Stabilization | \$7,000.00 |
| Town of Topsham | Willey Hill Road Riverbank Erosion | \$3,750.00 |
| Total | | \$185,515.00 |



Better Backroads Program Staffing

| Position | Duties | Status |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Program Administrator (0.5 FTE) | Grant administration, program oversight and planning. | Hired August 2005 by Northern VT Resource Conservation and Development Council |
| Program Coordinator (1.0 FTE) | On-site technical assistance to Champlain basin towns, 50% time spent in Missisquoi and St Albans Bay basins. Encourage and aid participation in grant program. Assist with information gathering for program planning. | Hiring Process Ongoing, VT Better Backroads Steering Committee |

Clean and Clear Action Plan – Better Backroads Indicators

| # | Indicator |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Projects | |
| 1 | Number of Towns in Champlain basin with a Road Inventory and Capital Budget Plan |
| 2 | Number of Towns in Champlain basin to receive Category B Grant (Correct and Existing Erosion Problem) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Length (feet) of stabilized ditch Number new stable culverts and/or culverts headers Area (ft²) of bank stabilized |
| Education and Training | |
| 3 | Number of technical assistance site visits provided |
| 4 | Number of towns represented at workshops |
| Policy | |
| 5 | Develop “Standard Road Management Protocols” to compliment the VT Better Backroads Manual by 2007 |